



HSIN | Homeland Security
Information Network



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Delivering Mission Success

A Message from the **HSIN Executive Steering Committee**

To Our Homeland Security Partners,

This year, the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) played key information sharing and collaboration roles in addressing COVID-19, presidential election security, violent civil unrest, and numerous hurricanes and other natural disasters. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) developed HSIN to facilitate information sharing, situational awareness, and collaboration across the Homeland Security Enterprise, which extends beyond DHS and includes our federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, international and private sector partners.

Today, approximately 148,000 registered HSIN users are making important contributions to our nation's security and resilience. With the improved situational awareness provided by HSIN, public safety partners are better able to share information on emerging threats, collaborate on incident response operations, and allocate available resources in the most effective and efficient manner possible. In daily operations, HSIN is helping partners maximize the effectiveness of limited resources by expanding their access to actionable information. The following examples provide a snapshot of how HSIN contributed to homeland security this year:

- **COVID-19:** 246 organizations—148 state and local, 68 DHS, 24 other federal government, one tribal, three private sector and two non-governmental agencies—used HSIN to coordinate activities in response to the coronavirus pandemic.
- **Election Security:** DHS' Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center teamed with HSIN to operate web-based Cyber Situational Awareness Rooms, which allowed live monitoring of election security threats and enabled interagency officials to quickly collaborate on analysis and incident response.
- **Violent Civil Unrest:** Approximately 50 agencies representing 33 states and the District of Columbia—including law enforcement, emergency management, public safety, and National Guard units—used HSIN and the HSIN Connect DHS Virtual Situational Awareness Room to facilitate interagency information sharing and coordination for risk mitigation and response to criminal incidents.

Throughout fiscal year 2020 (FY20), HSIN supported security and public safety at many high-profile events including the State of the Union address, NFL Super Bowl, MLB World Series, and the presidential debate held in Cleveland. HSIN was also used by FEMA, the U.S. Coast Guard, state and local emergency management agencies, law enforcement, and other organizations to track, prepare and respond to numerous hurricanes including Douglas, Hanna, Isaias, Laura, Marco, Sally and Delta.

We appreciate the contributions of all the homeland security partners who rely on HSIN for information sharing, collaboration and operational coordination, and we invite you to review this year's HSIN Annual Report for more examples that demonstrate how HSIN has expanded Homeland Security Enterprise capabilities nationwide to meet our customers' needs.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank DiFalco". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Frank DiFalco
HSIN ESC Co-Chair, OPS

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Executive Summary

Over the past year, HSIN rose to meet many challenges that were unforeseen when FY20 began: The COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the declaration of a national emergency on March 13; civil unrest, which accelerated after George Floyd's death on May 26 in Minneapolis; and a year-long expansion of resources dedicated to election security.

COVID-19 Response

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, HSIN provided critical support to partners who faced many unique challenges, including social distancing, virus testing and the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE). Some examples include:

- A HSIN Emergency Management (EM) site was used to share information, track incidents and coordinate responses to support EM professionals in their COVID-19 activities such as operations involving the use and availability of lifesaving equipment and supplies.
- A HSIN Critical Infrastructure (CI) site was used to share COVID-19 information related to CI sectors across the country including healthcare, critical manufacturing, government facilities and transportation systems.
- A HSIN Intelligence (HSIN-Intel) site was used to share criminal and intelligence data, products and analysis with fusion centers and law enforcement officials at all levels of government, providing enhanced situational awareness.
- The DHS National Operations Center (NOC) used HSIN to share information and track active COVID-19 incidents to support situational awareness and a common operating picture for the entire federal government as well as for state, local and tribal governments.

Additionally, HSIN supported federal, state and local partners by providing trusted Virtual Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) via HSIN Connect, allowing personnel to coordinate emergency response regardless of their location. Partners used HSIN Exchange to communicate requests for information (RFIs) about operations such as COVID-19 testing as well as plans for setting up temporary hospitals and mid-level treatment centers. Also, the HSIN National Situational Awareness Room—which is used during nationwide incident response efforts—allowed

fusion centers and other public safety organizations to access up-to-the-minute situational awareness that assisted officials with public safety planning, preparedness and response.

Election Security

DHS' Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) teamed with HSIN on a web-based Cyber Situational Awareness (CyberSitAware) Room that was managed by CISA and used primarily by federal partners. At the state, local and territorial levels, the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EI-ISAC) used another HSIN CyberSitAware Room. Both HSIN Connect rooms allowed live monitoring of election threats and enabled officials at all levels of government to quickly collaborate on analysis and incident response, which was an unprecedented achievement in election security.

Throughout the year, HSIN also supported other federal, state and local partners across the nation as they worked to mitigate risks related to election infrastructure. For example, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) worked with HSIN to connect the Pennsylvania Department of State, county election directors, county emergency managers, county chief information officers, other state agencies and the federal government to bolster security of the overall election infrastructure across the state.

An innovative election dashboard on HSIN connected 67 county election commissioners with their emergency managers, along with state and federal resources, to better protect the integrity of the voting process. The dashboard on HSIN allowed vetted personnel to view a common operating picture where users could track cybersecurity threats, power outages and other factors that could impact more than one municipality.

School Safety

HSIN played an integral role in the launch of a nationwide school safety initiative, SchoolSafety.gov, which supports safety and emergency planning for schools across the country. In addition to the public-facing website, individuals who join the HSIN community within SchoolSafety.gov get access to

real-world examples of emergency plans from other schools. For schools that already have an emergency plan, members of the HSIN community can improve the comprehensiveness of their plans by seeing ideas from other HSIN members. COVID-19 resources available on SchoolSafety.gov include information about curriculum and distance learning, physical spacing and testing and sanitation and PPE.

Other FY20 accomplishments include:

- The new **HSIN Secure Collaboration Platform** entered its implementation phase in September 2020. This major initiative involves rolling out a new SharePoint platform to approximately 2,000 HSIN communities. The new system is designed to work within a cloud environment and enhances functionality for users by simplifying data management and access, accelerating processes and delivering improved performance in areas such as data search capabilities.
- Deployed new functionality for the **Transportation Security Administration (TSA) InfoBoards** system, which is used to disseminate mission-critical information to stakeholders in the transportation security community. The information sharing system is accessible from HSIN and allows authorized users to access, add and exchange information while also integrating other security-related information and communications at the Sensitive Security Information (SSI) level.
- Deployed the **HSIN Connect Access Management Pod (AMP)** tool to stakeholders including CISA and the EI-ISAC. AMP facilitates the use of breakout rooms within a single HSIN Connect session and allows the host to control user access to individual breakout rooms. The HSIN AMP tool provided additional capabilities to improve management of election security efforts for the national election and is used by multiple stakeholders to manage information flow for their missions. AMP was developed through a partnership with HSIN, DHS' Science and Technology Directorate and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

With approximately 148,000 registered HSIN users at the end of FY20, HSIN's contributions to homeland security continue to expand as more partners become active participants in the Homeland Security Enterprise (HSE). HSIN's role in facilitating interagency and public-private sector collaboration across the country continues to demonstrate the value of HSIN to DHS' mission and to national security and resiliency.



147,752
registered HSIN users



118,367
average HSIN logins
per month



1,900+
mission-focused
communities on HSIN



19,527
real-time information
sharing sessions on
HSIN Connect



17.5
average speed in
seconds to answer
Help Desk calls

These values will be revisited in the FY21 report to demonstrate lifetime achievements of the HSIN program.

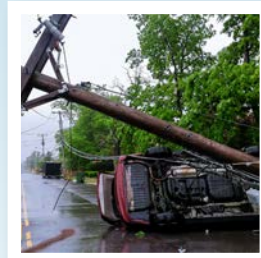
FY20 HSIN Engagements

november



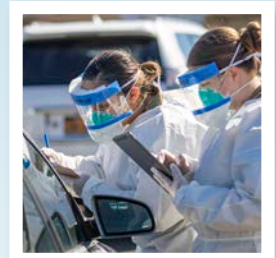
- NFL Dolphins vs. Bills
- NASCAR Ford EcoBoost 400
- National Fusion Center Association Conference
- Atlanta Veteran's Day Run

january



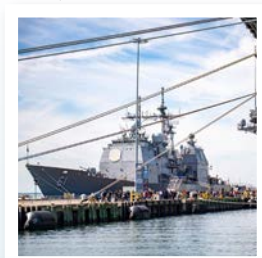
- 450 Reports of Severe Weather in Southeast U.S.
- Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack Exercise
- Houston Marathon
- NFL Pro Bowl in Orlando 📅

march



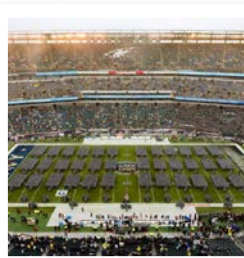
- 171 Organizations Use HSIN for COVID-19 Operations
- Single-Day Record for HSIN Connect Use, Up 558% Compared to Pre-COVID-19
- Little Rock Marathon and Events

october



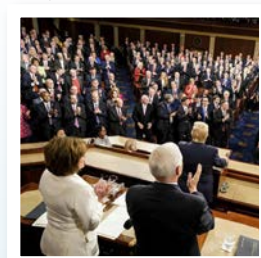
- Naval Station Norfolk FleetFest
- Chicago Marathon 📅
- Georgia Tech vs. North Carolina Football Game
- MLB World Series

december

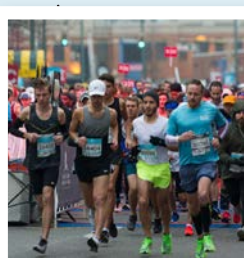


- Army-Navy College Football Game 📅
- Orange Bowl Football Game 📅

february



- State of the Union Address 📅
- NFL Super Bowl in Miami 📅
- Mardi Gras New Orleans 📅



- St. Jude Marathon 📅



- Nationwide SchoolSafety.gov Launch

Color Key:

■ Daily Operations & Exercises

■ Incident Support

■ Planned Events

■ Supported multiple consecutive years

may



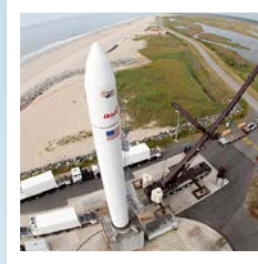
○ Partners Begin Relying on HSIN to Mitigate Risks During Civil Unrest

○ 228 Organizations Nationwide Use HSIN for COVID-19

○ 30 National Capital Region Agencies Use HSIN for COVID-19

○ 300 Users Attend COVID-19 User Group Webinar

july



○ NASA Mission Minotaur Launch



○ Washington DC July 4 Salute to America

○ Hurricanes Douglas and Hanna

september

○ Cyber Shield 2020 Exercise

○ Kentucky Derby



○ West Coast Wildfires

○ Hurricane Sally

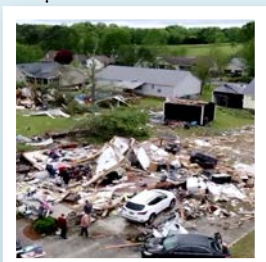
○ Presidential Debate in Cleveland, Ohio

april

○ Federal COVID-19 Response Task Force HSIN Site Launched

○ 800 Participants Use HSIN for New Jersey COVID-19 Coordination

○ Average Daily HSIN Connect Use for All of April Up 328% Compared to Pre-COVID-19



○ Alabama, Mississippi and Virginia Severe Weather

june



○ North Carolina National Guard Hurricane Exercise

○ 33 States and 50 Agencies Use HSIN to Mitigate Risks During Civil Unrest

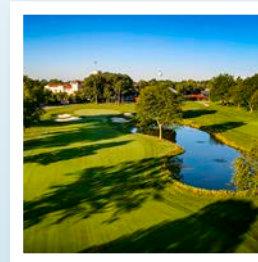
○ Eight States and DC Use HSIN to Support Election Security for Primaries

○ Tropical Storm Cristobal

august



○ Hurricanes Isaias and Laura



○ PGA Championship in Olympia Fields, Illinois

○ Tropical Storm Marco

Strategic Goals and Accomplishments

To support the program's strategic development, HSIN uses a model of focused mission growth to set goals that prioritize quality of the user experience while delivering value to partner organizations.

FY20 Objectives and Accomplishments



Achieve Growth

Achieve growth in service application and adoption, and presence in critical mission areas.

Objectives

- Strengthen and enhance relationships with existing HSIN users to create more recurring usage.
- Expand mission usage within DHS and with external partners.

Accomplishments

- Supported users as average HSIN logins per month increased from 81,256 (FY19) to 118,367 (FY20) and registered HSIN users increased from 129,073 to 147,752.
- Demonstrated HSIN's scalability when average daily use of HSIN Connect surged by 644% and remained above 200% for four consecutive months (March through June).
- Made unprecedented contributions to election security by enabling CISA, EI-ISAC and numerous other federal, state and local partners to monitor and quickly respond to threats.
- Supported the launch of a nationwide school safety initiative, SchoolSafety.gov.
- Enabled numerous partners including the U.S. Coast Guard, National Guard units, state and local emergency management agencies, law enforcement and other organizations to prepare for, respond to and recover from hurricanes during an above average storm season.



Build and Enhance Services

Strengthen internal business and management functions to more effectively and efficiently deliver services that homeland security operators need to fulfill their missions.

Objectives

- Support other mission-critical DHS information sharing systems within the cloud computing environment.
- Work with federal partners to provide additional datasets and informational tools that advance the depth of information and insights available within HSIN.
- Streamline delivery of solutions to user communities.

Accomplishments

- Led the new HSIN Secure Collaboration Platform into its implementation phase in September 2020.
- Supported successful DHS “Cloud Factory 2” Authority to Operate (ATO) and integrated with the DHS Headquarters Cloud platform to increase program efficiencies and support the delivery of cost-effective solutions.
- Deployed enhanced functionality for Transportation Security Administration (TSA) InfoBoards.
- Updated functionality for the Special Event Assessment Rating (SEAR) system.
- Deployed updates to HSIN Exchange’s form-building capabilities.
- Matured HSIN’s advanced reporting and analytics capabilities, which help provide customers insight into trends within their data sets; for example, made U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Analytic Toolkit available to the HSIN-Intel community.
- Updated HSIN’s cost model and integrated it with the fiscal year budget cycle and product management framework and made HSIN’s service delivery approach compatible with a Software as a Service (SaaS) model.



Strengthen Delivery

Enhance information sharing technology services offered to homeland security partners while developing and deploying new, innovative solutions aligned to achieve the Information Sharing Environment (ISE) mission.

Objectives

- Enhance customer engagement with all HSIN users by aligning with the Solutions Development Directorate (SDD) roadmap and HSIN's own product management strategy.
- Maintain sustainable growth by continuing to follow project management methodology when improving existing products.
- Promote the reuse of high-value, efficient solutions that can be quickly and cost-effectively replicated across HSIN communities to meet their mission requirements.
- Continue to produce replicable models and use cases that benefit numerous partners and can be reused by multiple jurisdictions nationwide.

Accomplishments

- Co-developed the HSIN Connect Access Management Pod (AMP) tool with DHS' Science and Technology Directorate and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and deployed the tool to stakeholders including CISA and the EI-ISAC.
- Refined the core HSIN solution based on lessons learned, best practices, awareness of common requirements and usage and emerging commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) and government off-the-shelf (GOTS) solutions.
- Refined HSIN's requirements integration process within the Mission Systems Services Division (MSSD) to ensure customers' mission needs and application features were met through stakeholder-focused solutions.
- Leveraged the HSIN User Group and collaborated with the HSIN Executive Steering Committee to ensure the program was responsive to user feedback while controlling costs and minimizing customized solutions.
- Upheld security and trust by responding to the latest policy and security updates while maintaining FISMA High Confidentiality, High Integrity and High Availability (H-H-H) of systems and data.

HSIN at a Glance

Every day, homeland security partners—ranging from counterterrorism personnel and cybersecurity analysts to school resource officers and first responders—rely on HSIN to support their missions. In FY20, HSIN continued meeting the needs of its users by providing reliable and secure communications tools and outstanding user support.

HSIN is...



**A User-Driven
Program**



**A Trusted
Platform**



**Interoperable and
Mission-Based**



**A Conduit to
Mission Integration**

Value of HSIN to Partners' Mission Success—HSIN Users:

- Instantly communicate up-to-date, mission-critical information with other HSIN users.
- Seamlessly collaborate across agencies and jurisdictions in real time using HSIN Connect.
- Access on-demand training on HSIN Learn to get the most value from HSIN's resources.
- Securely submit and respond to requests for information (RFIs) across the National Network of Fusion Centers and Terrorist Screening Center.
- Access geospatial and mapping resources to rapidly visualize data and “hot spots” on maps.

Methodology for Assessing Growth and Achievements

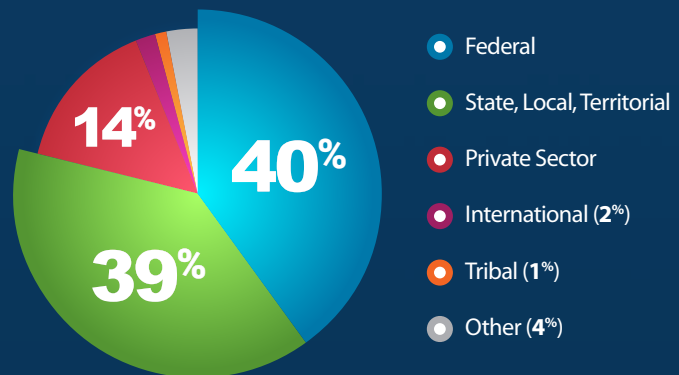
Each year, HSIN requests all users to participate in the HSIN Annual Assessment, which is an online questionnaire that provides users with the opportunity to provide feedback and recommend new features for HSIN. The assessment provides data on how HSIN is used to support operations and helps identify features and operations that need to be evaluated for change or enhancement. The results from the FY20 HSIN Annual Assessment, along with other program metrics, are presented throughout this annual report.

Who are HSIN Users?

This year, approximately 148,000 users across various mission areas including cybersecurity, emergency management, intelligence, law enforcement, critical infrastructure and public health used HSIN to help keep our nation safe and secure.

HSIN daily users include:

- Police officers and firefighters
- Counternarcotics agents
- Information officers, intelligence analysts and fusion center directors
- Cybersecurity analysts and cyber intelligence analysts
- School resource officers
- Homeland security advisors
- Emergency management directors
- Critical infrastructure planners and risk analysts
- Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) analysts



U.S. Customs and Border Protection



Office of Intelligence and Analysis



CYBERSECURITY & INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY AGENCY



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement



Transportation Security Administration



FEMA



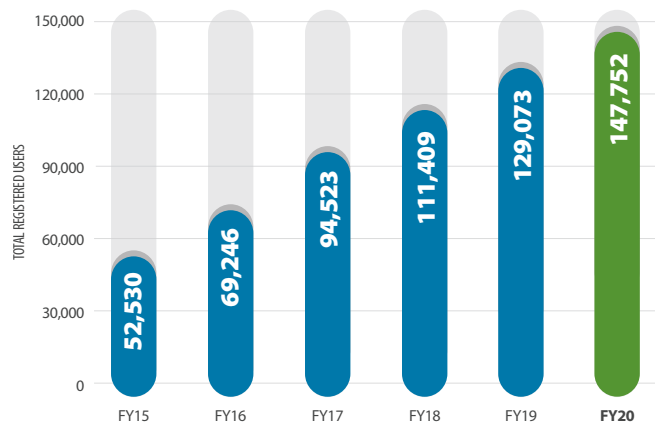
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD



CYBERSECURITY & INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY AGENCY

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER

FLETC



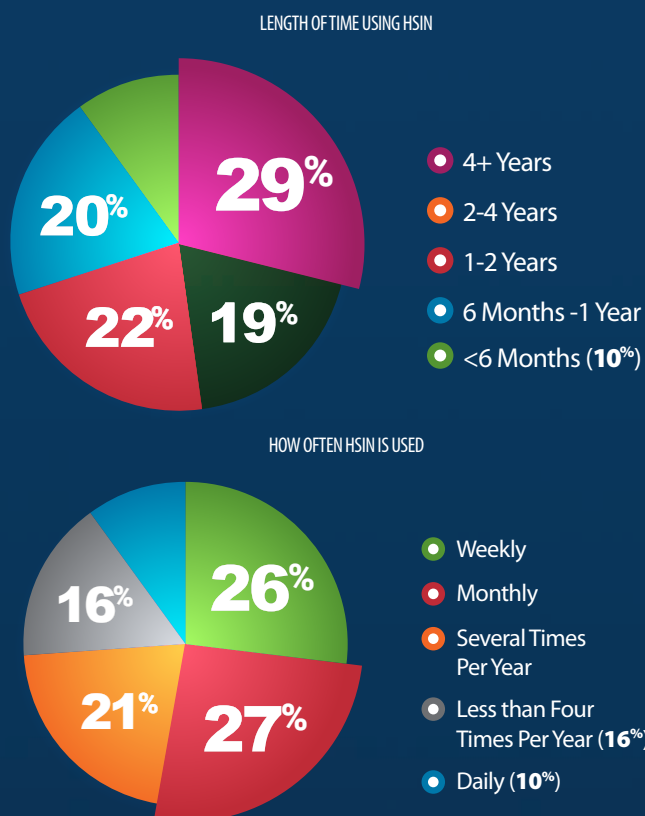
HSIN User Growth

Every year, HSIN increases information sharing capabilities and opportunities to meet new and existing user needs, which is a key programmatic goal. FY20 saw a 14% increase in the HSIN user population, starting the fiscal year with 129,073 registered users and ending with 147,752 registered users.

How is HSIN Used?

HSIN's ability to solve a variety of homeland security challenges has resulted in many partners' long-term use of HSIN. Of the total number of users surveyed, approximately 70% have been using HSIN for one year or more. Additionally, HSIN users frequently depend on the program's resources, as more than half of all HSIN users log in at least monthly, with 36% logging on at least once each week.

In many cases, HSIN users apply the program's tools on a regular basis throughout the year. At 62%, a majority of HSIN partners are using the platform for intelligence sharing. Other primary uses of HSIN include: planning and coordination (38%), incident response (33%), training (29%), exercise planning and management (28%) and investigative support (16%). The more HSIN is used daily, the more effective users become in applying the program's capabilities to their utmost potential in the event of an unplanned incident or other operation.



Customer Satisfaction

HSIN is committed to continuous support of the operational needs of its customers and improving the user experience year-over-year. In FY20, a remarkable 92% of respondents reported that HSIN supported their operational needs satisfactorily or better.

In terms of overall satisfaction with HSIN's support of their homeland security mission, an overwhelming majority of respondents, at 92%, reported that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with HSIN's support of their homeland security mission.

Operational Support

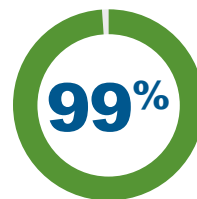
The HSIN program provides expertise, support and access to resources that allow homeland security personnel to do their jobs more efficiently and effectively. A large part of this operational support is performed by the HSIN Mission Advocates team. HSIN Mission Advocates are information sharing subject matter experts who have the experience to help users apply the HSIN platform to its fullest potential across the Homeland Security Enterprise (HSE). HSIN Mission Advocates are with HSIN users every step of the way—through capturing operational needs, helping users take advantage of new HSIN features, providing best practices for effective coordination and collaboration, and assisting with event management.

HSIN Mission Advocates

HSIN Mission Advocates are:

- **Information integrators** who work with organizations to understand their operational needs, identify potential risks, determine how to mitigate them and help deploy appropriate resources needed to fulfill the mission.
- **Business consultants** who leverage lessons learned from supporting hundreds of homeland security and other public safety missions to provide onsite and online support as well as optimized solutions for missions.
- **Trusted advisors** who work with agency leadership, mission operators, their stakeholders and users across the country to support interagency collaboration and strategic and tactical operations; they also work to engage stakeholders and develop meaningful relationships that foster greater collaboration across the HSE.

In FY20, HSIN users were confronted with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, and HSIN Mission Advocates were in constant contact with users nationwide to offer support in information sharing, planning and coordination of public safety operations. A key part of strengthening the HSE involves working directly with federal, state, local, tribal, territorial and private sector users, and HSIN Mission Advocates leveraged lessons learned to support hundreds of users on a daily basis during the coronavirus outbreak.



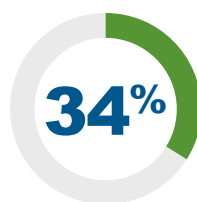
of users rate HSIN Mission Advocate performance as satisfactory or higher

Supporting Emergencies and Incident Response

In FY20, HSIN faced a challenge unlike anything it had experienced previously. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the HSIN program saw its usage spike, experiencing the largest user activity increase in the platform's history. Since late March, organizations utilizing HSIN for their COVID-19 response nearly doubled, with 246 organizations—148 state and local, 68 DHS, 24 other federal government, one tribal, three private sector and two non-governmental agencies—using HSIN resources to coordinate activities related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As many users learned throughout the year, HSIN allows public safety personnel to collaborate in real-time when responding to a variety of incidents. These go far beyond just supporting their COVID-19 efforts and include response to natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes and wildfires.

As FY20 progressed, partners who used HSIN for COVID-19 emergencies were often the same ones who were using HSIN for daily operations and planned events. As users' experience with the platform increases over time, the effectiveness of operations also increases: 34% of users surveyed said HSIN helped them prevent or respond to potential threats or incidents.



of users say HSIN helped them prevent or respond to potential threats or incidents

Supporting COVID-19 Pandemic Response

On a typical day during the first three months of the coronavirus outbreak, approximately 5,800 analysts, planners and first responders logged into the HSIN platform to share pertinent information and coordinate activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a 330% increase compared to pre-coronavirus baseline levels.

Across the nation and across the entire chain of command, at federal, state and local levels, HSIN helped partners make critical contributions by enabling a number of essential activities including virtual emergency operations centers (EOCs),



Other Instances of HSIN's COVID-19 Support

- A HSIN Emergency Management (EM) site was used to share information, track incidents and coordinate responses to support EM professionals in their COVID-19 activities such as operations involving the use and availability of lifesaving equipment and supplies.
- A HSIN Critical Infrastructure (CI) site was used to share COVID-19 information related to CI sectors across the country including healthcare, critical manufacturing, government facilities and transportation systems.
- A HSIN Intelligence site was used to share criminal and intelligence data, products and analysis with fusion centers and law enforcement officials at all levels of government, providing enhanced situational awareness.
- The DHS National Operations Center (NOC) used HSIN to share information and track active COVID-19 incidents to support situational awareness and a common operating picture for the entire federal government and state, local and tribal governments.

“The integration of state law enforcement and the emergency services sector in Delaware has been greatly enhanced by the use of HSIN to keep us better connected and communicating information in real-time.



Luis Rovira
DHS Field Intelligence
Officer, Delaware

continuity of operations, and the tracking of critical assets and requests for assets.

Virtual Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs)

HSIN supported federal, state and local partners by providing trusted virtual EOCs via HSIN Connect, allowing personnel to coordinate emergency response regardless of their location. For example, at a time when many U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) personnel were working remotely to maintain social distancing, USCG Sectors across the nation used HSIN to share vital information and maintain situational awareness. Teams of hundreds of personnel spread across multiple states used HSIN to maximize the effectiveness of teleworking requirements—personnel could immediately update mission progress, adjust operations and successfully plan for the next day's activities.

Continuity of Operations

Whether the mission involved intelligence analysis, critical infrastructure protection or law enforcement investigations, personnel engaged in the COVID-19 response were able to perform mission-critical operations using HSIN. For example, at least one state-level homeland security office used HSIN Connect in support of activating their Continuity of Operations Plan. The team used HSIN for interagency collaboration at a time when 85% of their staff was working in a remote capacity. Personnel used HSIN for real-time collaboration to support COVID-19 response, daily health checks and normal daily operations. HSIN Connect breakout rooms were used by law enforcement and other public safety personnel for situational awareness and to support operations such as the availability of equipment.

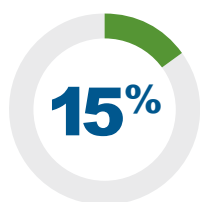
Tracking Critical Assets and Requests for Assets

HSIN was used to track the locations and amounts of critical supplies for COVID-19 response and to track requests from hospitals and other facilities for additional supplies. For example, members of the U.S. Navy used HSIN 24/7 to track resources, share different types of data sets, organize reference documents and immediately collaborate on rapidly changing information. Multiple Navy personnel commented that HSIN was their “one-stop shop” for critical COVID-19 information. Navy watchstanders, who provide situational awareness to emergency response teams and all levels of the command structure, used HSIN for real-time communications during COVID-19 operations.

On the national stage, HSIN helped to stand up the Federal COVID-19 Response Task Force Community of Interest for the Federal Emergency Management Agency

(FEMA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Through this HSIN site, the task force was able to coordinate the formal federal government COVID-19 response and had a space to collaborate on operations, resource availability and briefing documents. Members of the site were able to monitor community-based testing, laboratory diagnostics, medical countermeasure development, supply chain issues, community mitigation measures and continuity of operations and essential services.

Through its many efforts, HSIN was able to provide innovative COVID-19 response support to an unprecedented number of users while fulfilling critical needs. HSIN's efforts to support stakeholders during the COVID-19 pandemic has created a more connected, agile and effective community of homeland security professionals armed with the HSIN tools and resources as they confront a rapidly changing world.



increase of new
users to the HSIN
platform since FY19

Managing Civil Unrest

Over 50 different agencies across 33 states and the District of Columbia—including law enforcement, emergency management, public safety, National Guard units and fusion centers—used HSIN to support safety and security during periods of civil unrest in FY20. In numerous metro areas, hundreds of personnel used HSIN to monitor disturbances, track escalation of violence and investigate criminal activities.

Cross-jurisdictional partners used HSIN to maintain situational awareness, including sharing updates on city curfews, reports of violence and information available in open source and social media. The common operating picture provided by HSIN supported effective resource allocation and risk mitigation strategies, which helped protect protesters and critical infrastructure.

Washington, DC—The National Capital Region Threat Intelligence Consortium (NTIC) used multiple HSIN information sharing solutions to support communications with over 20 law enforcement and public safety partners during protests within the National Capital Region (NCR). The District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency's 24/7 "Watch and Warn Center" utilized HSIN tools for information sharing.



Illinois—The Illinois Statewide Terrorism & Intelligence Center supported Illinois State Police regional commands as well as several other organizational missions simultaneously using HSIN real-time information sharing and GMO geospatial tools.

Oklahoma—In response to civil unrest and protests taking place across the state, the Oklahoma Information Fusion Center (OIFC) used HSIN daily for real-time situational awareness and information sharing. OIFC used HSIN for planning, tracking responses and providing a common operating picture for state agencies.

Preparing for and Responding to Severe Weather

Emergencies can strike suddenly and with devastating effect. Ensuring the ability to withstand and rapidly recover from disruption due to emergencies is a shared DHS mission that all homeland security partners work together to achieve. Since 2005, HSIN has proven to be a critical resource for preparing for, responding to and recovering from major incidents.

To help government agencies and partner organizations best prepare themselves, HSIN is used to communicate best practices and lessons learned in a secure collaboration space and develop risk mitigation strategies that address key emergency factors as well as facilitate interagency and public-private sector coordination. HSIN provides users key resources to help plan and perform emergency management exercises. Forging relationships with partner agencies and officials are a key part of the equation, and HSIN Mission Advocates play an integral role in bringing all the components together.

Finally, although not a single organization would have wished for this situation, a silver lining from the COVID-19 pandemic is that they are now better prepared for any future emergency. The experience agencies and organizations gained will help them adapt existing tools and deploy scalable, reusable solutions whenever emergencies arise. The same HSIN tools being used to communicate requests for information (RFIs), reliably and securely share information and track active COVID-19 incidents have also been implemented for natural disasters such as hurricane response. HSIN tools continue to be used by fusion centers and other public safety organizations to access up-to-the-minute situational

Previously Established HSIN Connect Rooms Help Agencies Provide Hurricane Isaias Support

Emergency management and public safety agencies up and down the East Coast turned to HSIN to prepare for, respond to and create a common operating picture for Hurricane Isaias. For many of these agencies, the process of setting up a HSIN Connect room—the HSIN tool of choice for real-time information sharing—was easy as most of these agencies had previously established rooms for their COVID-19 response and management.

While one agency continued using their 24/7 HSIN Connect Room for communication with local public safety entities, others used HSIN Connect Rooms to monitor and share information regarding the storm's path as it moved throughout the northeast region. The ability to share beyond locality helped other state and local agencies better prepare and manage any repercussions.

“Sector Mobile uses HSIN to track assets pre- and post-hurricane, for example, which allows the Incident Management team to coordinate movements with personnel who are conducting duties across three states. This helps the entire team coordinate operations prior to the storm's arrival as well as during and after the storm when we conduct operations such as search and rescue.



Joshua Sharman
Command Center Supervisor,
U.S. Coast Guard Sector
Mobile, Alabama

“HSIN has proven so successful in our hurricane response operations that we’re planning on expanding use of HSIN to support our subordinate units.



Charles Mangus
Joint Operation Center Chief,
Florida National Guard



awareness to assist partners with public safety planning, preparedness and response.

Response to Hurricanes Douglas, Hanna, Isaías, Laura, Marco, Sally and Delta

During this year’s hurricane season, the DHS National Operations Center, U.S. Coast Guard, National Guard units, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and state and local emergency management agencies relied heavily on HSIN to streamline incident response operations. When responding to hurricanes and other tropical storms, HSIN provided a trusted network and secure environment needed to communicate and collaborate in real time.

When phone lines and cell towers suffered damage and communications systems were inoperable or overwhelmed, response teams were able to use HSIN’s communication features to coordinate operations. HSIN provided up-to-date data and mapping information, enabling first responders and other public safety officials to act rapidly and save lives. When the immediate danger was over and the storm clouds receded, HSIN was used as a central repository to share information concerning the impact of the disaster and the recovery activities offered by individual agencies.



Supporting Planned Events and Exercises

Whether it is helping the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) reach the stars or supporting cross-jurisdictional partners as they meet their goals here on earth, HSIN provides users a platform they can use to collaborate seamlessly and work together as a cohesive team.

In FY20, with the use of HSIN tools, users were able to maintain security at special events and conduct exercises essential for planning and preparedness. HSIN was also able to support election security initiatives involving federal, state and local agencies nationwide as well as provide safety and security operations support to NASA tactical operations.

Of the users surveyed this year, 40% used HSIN to support a planned event or exercise, while 44% of users who needed to securely collaborate across geographic and jurisdictional boundaries reported that HSIN helped them meet this goal.

“Numerous planning sessions with all county emergency management agencies, election directors, county chief information officers along with the Pennsylvania Department of State, DHS’ Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, HSIN, and with the support of PEMA Director Randy Padfield and PEMA leadership, allowed this project to blossom. Some election directors met with their emergency management counterparts for the first time ever, learning about the resources at their disposal.

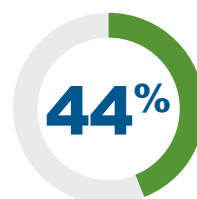


Melissa A. Frey, Special Assistant to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency Director and Pennsylvania HSIN Election Infrastructure (PAEI) Dashboard Project Lead

Providing Election Security

Throughout the 2020 election cycle, HSIN supported many federal, state and local partners as they worked to mitigate risks to election infrastructure. HSIN solutions deployed by partners allowed live monitoring of election threats and enabled officials at all levels of government to quickly collaborate on analysis and incident response.

DHS’ Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EI-ISAC) teamed with HSIN to bring real-time situational awareness and collaboration on cybersecurity threats impacting elections by using HSIN Connect rooms. Throughout the summer, the EI-ISAC, along with federal, state and local partners, used HSIN’s real-time information sharing solutions for live monitoring of election threats for state and territorial primaries.



of users say HSIN helped collaboration across agencies and jurisdictions

Maintaining Security at Events

In FY20, the COVID-19 pandemic created challenges for several high-profile events. While some of these events were lucky enough to be rescheduled (such as the MLB playoffs, Indy 500 and Kentucky Derby) others that would require law enforcement, emergency management and intelligence coordination (such as the NCAA Final Four, Boston Marathon, Chicago Pride Parade and Lollapalooza) were unfortunately canceled.

On a regular basis, city, county and state officials turn to HSIN to support their special event operations with secure information sharing and collaboration capabilities. HSIN brings valuable experience, expertise and tools to support public safety partners when they are called upon to provide event security.

Some of the events HSIN was able to support this year included:

Major League Baseball World Series (Oct. 22–30, 2019)

Throughout the FY20 World Series between the Washington Nationals and Houston Astros, the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and National Capital Region Threat Intelligence Consortium (NTIC) as well as the Houston Police Department and Houston Regional Intelligence Service Center used HSIN to support safety and security. For each game, more than 40,000 fans flocked to the stadiums, and partners used HSIN to improve situational awareness, monitor for incidents and coordinate response operations. Public safety, law enforcement and threat-focused partners including the FBI, Federal Aviation Administration, Homeland Security Investigations and the Transportation Security Administration leveraged HSIN's real-time information sharing capabilities to collaborate across local, state and federal entities.

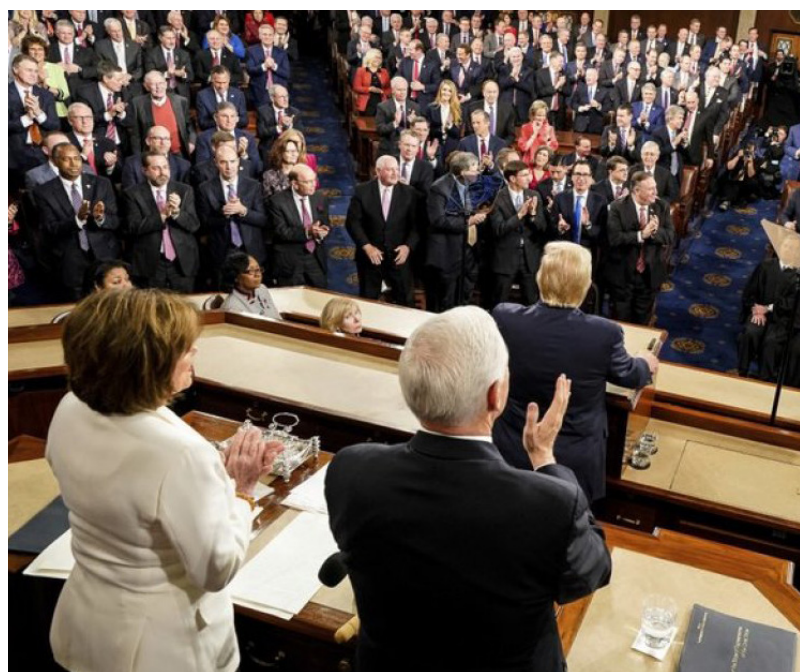
National Football League Super Bowl (Feb. 2, 2020)

For the eighth consecutive year, HSIN supported partners' operations at the Super Bowl. Every stadium and host city pose unique challenges, and numerous high-profile events occur in the days prior to the game. This year, 34 government agencies and over 630 users relied on HSIN for interagency collaboration. Law enforcement, intelligence analysts, investigators and emergency management personnel were among those who used HSIN for planning,

coordination, risk mitigation and incident tracking and response as more than 100,000 out-of-town fans flocked to South Florida for the game and related events.

State of the Union Address (Feb. 4, 2020)

The D.C. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency and multiple local, state and federal partners relied on HSIN for interagency coordination, real-time collaboration and operational security for the President's State of the Union address.



Kentucky Derby (Sept. 5, 2020)

While no fans were allowed into Churchill Downs for this year's Kentucky Derby, the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) and the Kentucky Army National Guard (KYANG) still required the support of HSIN's real-time information sharing solutions. CISA, DHS' Office of Operations Coordination (OPS), U.S. Coast Guard and other representatives from over 20 different local, state and federal agencies also participated in HSIN Connect sessions throughout the events. HSIN was primarily used to share information among those agencies assigned to support public safety. KYANG deployed HSIN Connect as part of their Civil Support Team operations for domestic support of civil authorities as multiple protest groups gathered in large numbers near the racetrack.



Countdown to Mission Success: NASA Looks to HSIN for Launch Support

On July 15 at 9:46 a.m. EST, Mission Minotaur successfully launched from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Wallops Flight Facility on Wallops Island, Virginia. The Minotaur IV rocket, carrying classified cargo, was part of a U.S. Space Force (USSF) Space and Missile Systems Center's Launch Enterprise program effort.

In preparation for and during the launch, the Wallops Flight Facility used HSIN and a HSIN Connect Room to coordinate activities with its partners at the federal, state and local levels. And on launch day, HSIN also helped NASA prepare in the unlikely event that there would be some sort of incident that required prompt action from NASA's Office of Protective Services, Accomack County and the City of Chincoteague. Through their HSIN Connect Room, the Wallops Flight Facility was in constant contact with emergency medical service, fire and rescue as well as law enforcement. HSIN is valuable to Wallops Flight Facility in that it allows the facility to integrate into various county and local emergency operations centers, ensuring vetted and accurate information is available and allowing the correct resources to be deployed for responding to an array of incident types.

“HSIN is a vital part of our emergency operations center process. During the countdown, there are certain activities that must be taken into account and all activities are coordinated at the visitor center, viewing areas, with the Virginia State police, etc. HSIN helps us make sure the launch takes place in a safe and secure manner.



Brenden Kettner
Emergency Manager for
NASA's Goddard Space
Flight Center

Supporting Training and Exercises

In a constantly changing world complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic and other incidents, organizations have turned to HSIN to serve as a conduit for training and exercises. From national cybersecurity training to state and local emergency and incident response exercises, HSIN support has helped numerous organizations adapt to meet new goals and missions.

Cyber Shield 2020

In mid-September, HSIN supported Cyber Shield 2020, an annual exercise that tests the cyber capabilities of all state and territorial National Guard cyber units. This year's virtual exercise was conducted by the National Guard Bureau, U.S. Army Reserve and participants.

HSIN's support of the annual Cyber Shield exercise since 2014 has played an integral role in fostering engagement among partners to prepare for disruptive or destructive cyberattacks. As the nation's largest unclassified cyber defense training exercise, Cyber Shield provides participants with valuable experience in cyber protection best practices and knowledge about industry network infrastructure.

Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack (CCTA) Exercise

HSIN supported approximately 50 organizations—including federal agencies, state and local law enforcement, emergency medical services, hospitals, public health organizations, fire protection services, emergency management and private sector organizations—in a multi-day intelligence and information sharing event aimed at testing an organization's planning and preparedness. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and St. Louis Area Regional Response System (STARRS) coordinated the operations for the event using a local HSIN Situational Awareness Room (SitRoom) to simulate and evaluate partners' response to a Complex Coordinated Terrorist Attack (CCTA).

Organizations were challenged to meet 32 core capabilities identified by FEMA to support national preparedness. With each exercise, partners identify which capabilities need strengthening and then develop and update plans and procedures. Many of these organizations identified HSIN as a key resource they could use to help close their gaps.

Hazardous Weather Training and Exercises

With the 2020 hurricane season looming, HSIN met with several U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) units and public safety agencies across the country to provide training and run emergency scenario exercises. For organizations and agencies new to the HSIN platform, the training explained how HSIN could be used for incident management, information sharing and real-time collaboration among public and private sector partners. For those organizations and agencies more familiar with the HSIN platform, HSIN was used to support real-time information sharing during hurricane exercises, which help prepare personnel for hurricane response and recovery.



COVID-19 Throws a Wrench into Presidential Debate Planning

When the Commission on Presidential Debates moved the first debate to the Case Western Reserve University due to COVID-19 constraints at the originally planned venue on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, the city of Cleveland and other public safety partners stepped up to meet the challenge.

With two months to plan, DHS' Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) began working with HSIN to quickly coordinate and train partners for the event. HSIN Connect was used to help conduct tabletop exercises for the Cleveland Police and Cleveland fusion center in lieu of in-person meetings due to COVID-19.

Supporting Daily Operations

When the COVID-19 outbreak first began, HSIN supported partners in the same way it has for any other emergency or incident. But as the year progressed and the pandemic persisted, public safety partners realized they needed more and turned to HSIN for support of their daily operations. Personnel took advantage of HSIN tools for real-time collaboration, situational awareness and support for operations related to the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE).

While the pandemic continued, HSIN users realized the value of the tools and features HSIN provides for everyday use. HSIN provides a common operating picture and immediate situational awareness that improves decision-making in daily operations for all of its users. In response to the FY20 HSIN Annual Assessment, 62% of users surveyed said they use HSIN for daily operations. Around the country, HSIN helps keep communities safe by supporting police, fire, health professionals and other community partners.

Combating Crime During the COVID-19 Pandemic

In FY20, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies still needed to carry out daily public safety operations despite facing a bevy of COVID-19 related

challenges. While maintaining social distancing practices, local law enforcement officers turned to HSIN for support in carrying out routine operations such as criminal investigations and search and arrest activities.

Using HSIN Connect, law enforcement officers were able to send just one or two investigators out to a crime scene instead of sending an investigation team (up to 30 members) to accomplish the same task. HSIN Connect usage on mobile devices allowed law enforcement officers to share video with their entire investigative team off-site while safeguarding personnel.

With cyber criminals exploiting the COVID-19 crisis and misinformation and fraudulent activity running rampant, law enforcement and other public safety partners at fusion centers across the country used HSIN as a trusted solution for information sharing. Fusion centers used tools such as HSIN Exchange and HSIN Chat to provide their regions access to timely, vetted and accurate COVID-19-related information. With these tools, they were able to share essential documents for search and arrest warrants and aid in the capture of wanted persons. The HSIN chat function also allowed users to share incident information entirely remotely and was welcomed by local law enforcement agencies for its ease of use.



Intercepting Illegal Drugs

The New Jersey Drug Monitoring Initiative (DMI) community on HSIN supports hundreds of users across numerous states who specialize in areas such as forensic crime analysis, medical examination, toxicology, law enforcement and healthcare, each with a specific focus on the opioid epidemic. By bringing together a versatile set of stakeholders and analyzing nontraditional data, this community has been able to provide valuable insight into factors outside of traditional law enforcement consideration. Over the past couple of years, the DMI community on HSIN has been a key resource supporting the dismantling of illegal drug distribution groups and the arrest of multiple high-level suppliers operating in New Jersey.



Keeping Schools Safe

A nationwide school safety initiative, [SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov), launched in early 2020 to support safety and emergency planning for schools across the country. The initiative, outlined in the Final Report of the Federal Commission on School Safety, recommended that “the federal government should develop a clearinghouse to assess, identify, and share best practices related to school security measures, technologies, and innovations.” [SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) was developed to fulfill those key recommendations from the commission.

Visitors to the website can find resources such as guidance, training materials, fact sheets and security plan templates. In addition to resources available on the public website, school officials can request to join HSIN through [SchoolSafety.gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov), where members can see what other schools are doing to improve safety. Individuals who join the HSIN community get access to real-world examples of emergency plans from other schools. For schools that already have an emergency plan, members of the HSIN community can improve plan comprehensiveness by seeing ideas from other planners.

In a separate initiative, the state of Georgia’s school safety community is a model for deployment in other states as it bridges communication gaps across 539 cities and 2,300 school facilities. The Georgia school safety community worked with HSIN Mission Advocates to create an i-Track School Safety tool, which is an event and lead management system that standardizes the data submission process and allows multiple agencies to work together on related cases and incidents. Georgia law enforcement personnel, such as college campus police and school safety coordinators/school resource officers, use i-Track to share information, spot trends across the state and maintain situational awareness.



Operational Enhancements

Enhancements to HSIN delivered in FY20 allowed agencies across all levels of government and the private sector to improve their operational processes. By working closely with users throughout the year, including in HSIN User Group sessions, HSIN was able to identify needs and develop solutions that met partners' mission requirements.

New HSIN Secure Collaboration Platform

The new HSIN Secure Collaboration Platform, which entered its implementation phase in September 2020, is enhancing functionality for users by simplifying data management and access, accelerating processes and delivering improved performance in areas such as data search capabilities. The new system is designed to work within a cloud environment, offering a more user-friendly interface and providing more out-of-the-box capabilities. As the HSIN Secure Collaboration Platform was rolled out to approximately 2,000 HSIN communities, HSIN Mission Advocates worked together with users, making sure their sites were successfully migrated.

“When the need arises, we rely on HSIN to support real-time situational awareness, enable more effective risk mitigation and help us allocate resources in the most efficient manner possible.”



Manuel Soto
Emergency Manager, City of Orlando
Office of Emergency Management

HSIN Connect Access Management Pod (AMP) Tool

The HSIN Connect Access Management Pod, developed through a partnership with HSIN, DHS' Science and Technology Directorate and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, facilitates the use of breakout rooms within a single HSIN Connect web-conferencing session. AMP also allows the meeting host to control user access to individual breakout rooms.

In FY20, the HSIN AMP tool provided users with additional capabilities to improve the management of election security efforts. HSIN deployed AMP to stakeholders including DHS' Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EI-ISAC). The mission of the EI-ISAC is to improve the overall cybersecurity posture of state, local, tribal and territorial election offices via collaboration and information sharing among members, including DHS, other federal agencies and private sector partners.

Interagency and Private Sector Partnerships

By allowing seamless collaboration across interagency and private sector partners, HSIN enhances homeland security operations in an unprecedented manner. Infrastructure owners and operators are typically private sector enterprises involved in energy, manufacturing, telecommunications, financial services and food and agriculture. Other private sector partners are involved in commercial security organizations, non-profit groups and a variety of volunteer organizations that spring into action to support disaster relief. With HSIN, all partners from across the country can securely communicate and collaborate to achieve shared goals.

RISS Centers Onboarded to HSIN Exchange

HSIN completed onboarding of all six Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) centers to HSIN Exchange, which is a request for information (RFI) solution that manages and prioritizes RFIs. HSIN Exchange increases efficiency in operations by enabling seamless interagency and cross-jurisdictional communications. In addition to successfully completing governance processes for all six RISS centers, HSIN Mission Advocates provided training sessions for RISS analysts.

RISS is used and trusted by hundreds of thousands of law enforcement officers and criminal justice professionals in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, England, New Zealand and parts of Canada. More than 9,200 local, state, federal and tribal law enforcement and public safety agencies are members of RISS.

RISS works regionally and nationally to respond to the unique crime problems of each region while strengthening the country's information sharing environment. The RISS centers are now using HSIN Exchange to facilitate secure, centralized requests

for law enforcement information nationwide. RISS supports efforts against organized and violent crime, gang activity, drug activity, terrorism and violent extremism, human trafficking, identity theft, cybercrime and other regional priorities.

“Law enforcement officers, investigators and analysts from local, state and federal partners use the Fort Worth Intelligence Exchange HSIN site to share information related to ongoing regional incidents, criminal suspects and operations.”



Jeff Keck

Lieutenant and Director of the Fort Worth Intelligence Exchange

Fusion Centers Use HSIN Exchange for COVID-19 Support

Public safety partners used HSIN Exchange RFIs to support COVID-19 operations, and 64 fusion centers participated in coronavirus-related RFIs, generating 1,072 responses. The RFIs were used to track a multitude of COVID-19 responses related to operations, intelligence and planning activities. Fusion centers serve as focal points in states and major urban areas for the receipt, analysis, gathering and sharing of threat-related information between federal, state, local, tribal, territorial and private sector partners.



32,466
RFIs submitted on
HSIN Exchange in FY20

FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs)

When disasters strike, many community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other private sector groups seek to help during these times of need. Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) play key roles in maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of volunteer efforts. VALs have been using HSIN for more than five years to train and share information with partners such as Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs).

VALs have created a variety of collaborative tools such as a disaster library searchable by categories, a membership directory of key partners across the states and territories, a database of tasks that community members can access and update and a geospatial tools area to map activities.

“By providing a centralized and secure location for real-time information sharing, VOADs and federal partners are able to identify immediate needs, coordinate responses and get support to help mitigate the impact of disasters on the people who are affected. Using HSIN has enhanced the tactical and strategic success of our mission.”



Lesli Remaly-Netter
FEMA Region IV Voluntary Agency Liaison

Government Agencies Using HSIN

Since 2006, HSIN has been the designated DHS solution for sharing Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information and intelligence within DHS and with all of its partners, and thousands of DHS users trust HSIN to support their missions. Beyond DHS, hundreds of government agencies rely on HSIN for a wide variety of missions including intelligence, law enforcement, emergency management, infrastructure protection, cybersecurity, defense and public health.

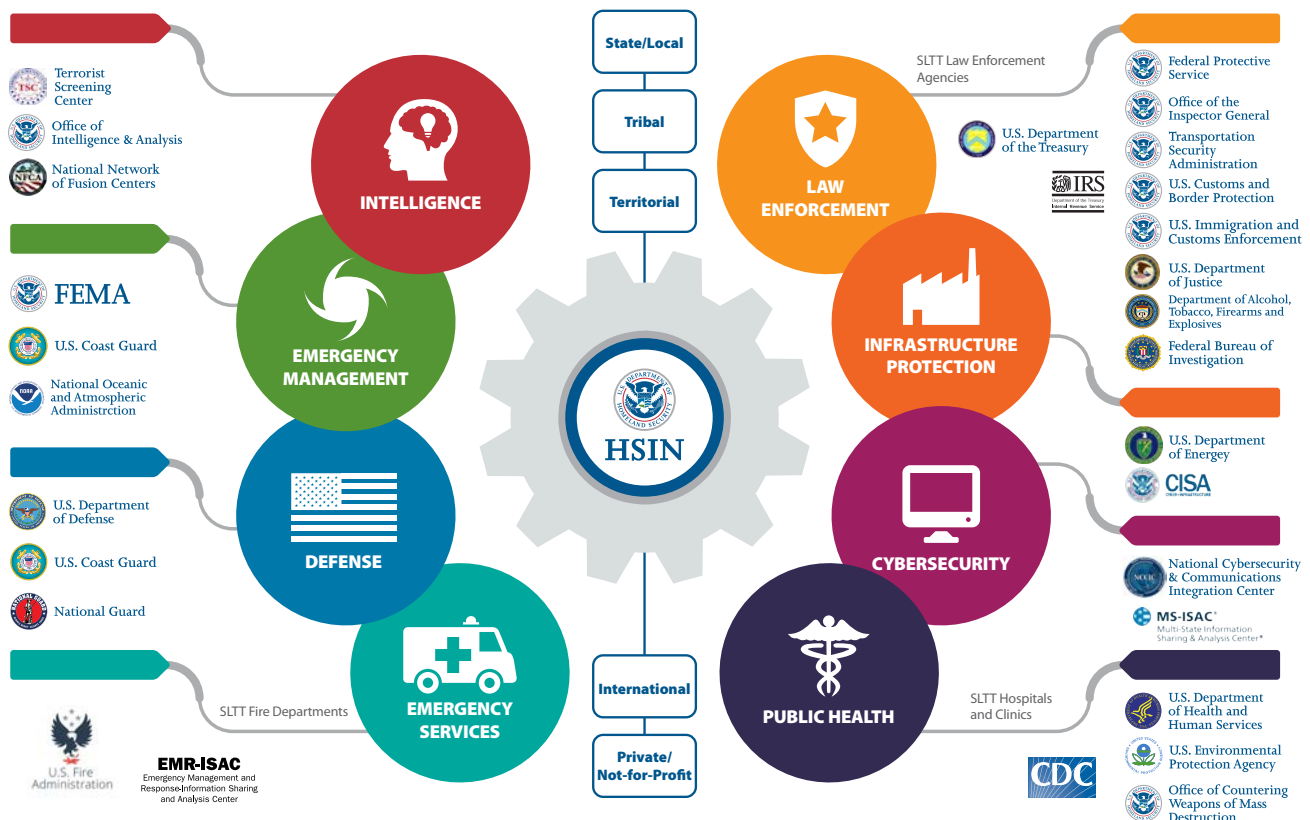
During FY20, HSIN played an integral role in supporting DHS and other agencies in areas such as COVID-19 operations, strengthening security of election infrastructure, mitigating risks related to civil unrest and enabling efficient planning and response to hurricanes and other severe weather.

Some of the DHS organizations that use HSIN for daily operations, planned events and incident response include the Office of Intelligence and Analysis

(I&A), Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), U.S. Coast Guard and the DHS National Operations Center. Other government agencies using HSIN include the U.S. Departments of Defense, Justice, State, Treasury, Transportation, Energy, Agriculture and Health and Human Services.

Federation is a HSIN initiative that facilitates secure information sharing among partner systems. Federated partners can seamlessly navigate between their systems and HSIN through verified identity credentials (user ID, password, PIN). The single sign-on allows users to manage a single set of credentials to securely sign-on to partner networks. At the end of FY20, HSIN Federated accounts numbered 29,263.

Representative Sample of Government Missions and Agencies Using HSIN



Private Sector Partnerships

Of the users surveyed in this year's HSIN Annual Assessment, private sector partners made up nearly 14% of HSIN users and included critical infrastructure planners and risk analysts, information officers and private security officers. HSIN provides a secure environment for public and private partners to come together, collaborate and maintain situational awareness without compromising the security of their organization's local network.

Commercial Security Organizations

In Chicago, over 30 critical infrastructure and other key resource firms combine with more than 25 strategic partners from the public and private sectors in the ChicagoFIRST community. The team relies on HSIN to share information securely among businesses and public sector partners. Members of the ChicagoFIRST community address risk management issues that affect member firms, and they are involved in activities such as testing emergency response plans for cybersecurity, physical security and business continuity in the event of a disaster. DHS, the U.S. Treasury Department and Congress have all identified ChicagoFIRST as a model for public-private partnerships.

The Minneapolis Downtown Security Executive Group (DSEG) works with private sector firms to share live video from commercial businesses' security cameras, providing a more comprehensive operating picture and greater situational awareness in the downtown area. Using HSIN, the private-sector partners play a logistical support role for first responders and other public safety personnel during daily operations, major sporting events and unplanned incidents. HSIN communities such as DSEG and ChicagoFIRST illustrate how HSIN is expanding collaboration across commercial enterprises and federal, state, local, tribal and territorial partners.

Alabama Hospitals and Volunteer Groups Rely on HSIN for COVID-19 Operations

HSIN provided a common operating picture for hospitals, volunteer programs and other community partners working with the Montgomery City/County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) in Alabama,

which used HSIN as a virtual Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in support of its COVID-19 operations. Prior long-term HSIN use for other operations such as severe weather response enabled the EMA to quickly apply its HSIN expertise to the COVID-19 response.

HSIN allowed EMA personnel to comply with social distancing directives while providing public safety services to the Montgomery area and beyond. Members of the HSIN community could log into the HSIN Virtual EOC for updates and plan their operations accordingly. Commenting on the value HSIN brought to COVID-19 operations in the Montgomery area, Christina Thornton, Montgomery City/County EMA Director, remarked, "the HSIN program has been utterly priceless."

Hospital staff logged into HSIN and updated COVID-19 data related to testing, confirmed cases and COVID-19 test results. Additionally, daily documentation—which was date- and time-stamped—of who was requesting resources, helped the EMA efficiently manage and coordinate COVID-19 efforts.

“The Montgomery EMA COVID-19 Virtual EOC on HSIN provides a common operating picture for hospitals, community partners, elected officials, department heads of local and county government agencies and non-governmental organizations such as volunteer programs.



Christina Thornton
Montgomery City/County EMA Director

Critical Infrastructure Protection

Successful critical infrastructure protection requires coordination and collaboration among infrastructure owners and operators, DHS, other federal agencies and state and local government. The HSIN Critical Infrastructure (HSIN-CI) community serves as the primary nationwide DHS collaboration system for sharing Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information among private sector critical infrastructure owners and operators and government agencies.

Using HSIN, the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis and other agencies share actionable intelligence products with private sector partners. Members of the HSIN-CI community collaborate in a diverse range of mission areas, including critical infrastructure security and resilience, event security, cybersecurity and emergency preparedness and response. Increased public-private information sharing within the HSIN community supports greater overall security across the country as commercial enterprises work together with government agencies on shared goals.

DHS has designated HSIN-CI as its primary information sharing platform between fusion centers and the critical infrastructure sectors. HSIN-CI works with fusion centers to integrate locally based critical infrastructure enterprises into the HSIN-CI community, which connects local partners to the large existing network of national critical infrastructure owners and operators. Combining national, regional and local critical infrastructure information enhances infrastructure protection and resilience via the

sharing of bulletins, alerts and analysis that are specific to individual sectors.

HSIN-CI supports users in sectors that include transportation (air, rail, public transit, maritime, postal shipping and highways), healthcare, the defense industrial base, chemical, telecommunications, financial services, energy and food and agriculture. Through HSIN-CI, users can:

- Receive, submit and discuss timely, accurate and actionable information.
- Maintain a direct, trusted channel with DHS and other vetted sector stakeholders.
- Communicate risk information pertaining to threats, vulnerabilities and response and recovery activities affecting cross-sector and sector-specific operations.

HSIN's ability to provide a seamless flow of SBU information between public and private sectors allows partners to apply greater multidisciplinary expertise to public safety operations. With the private sector owning and operating 85% of the infrastructure deemed critical to the nation's physical and economic security, the continuous exchange of information between government and commercial enterprises is vital for effective emergency preparedness and response. The growth of HSIN communities facilitates these activities and directly improves risk mitigation, incident planning and resiliency building.



Mission-Critical Collaboration Resources

HSIN empowers users with the essential tools and resources they need to help support the homeland security mission. Thanks to HSIN, partners who are otherwise separated by incompatible communication systems benefit from the unparalleled level of situational awareness the platform provides across agencies, jurisdictions and private sector partners. Information sharing and collaboration tools, comprehensive training, on-call technical support and transparent communications all help partners meet their missions and maximize their daily efforts.

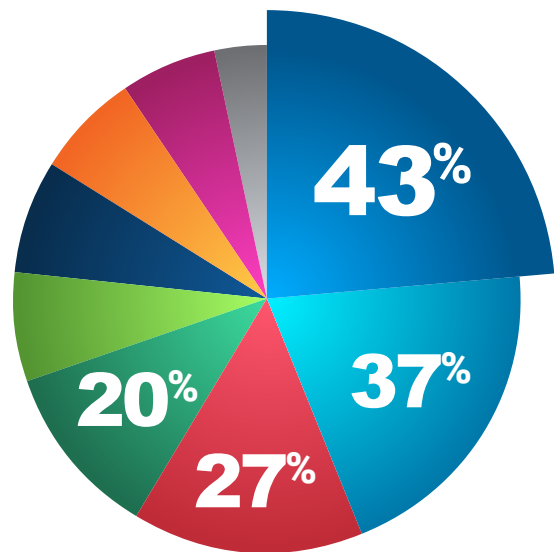
Features that Matter to Users

HSIN provides a multitude of readily accessible tools and capabilities designed to address the varied needs of HSIN users. These features have become widely used to support daily operations, prepare for planned events and respond to and mitigate risks during crisis situations. In FY20, many new and current HSIN users learned the value of these capabilities in their efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most-Used Features

Forty-three % of participants in HSIN's FY20 Annual Assessment selected SharePoint Lists and Document Libraries as their most used HSIN resources. HSIN Communities, FY19's most utilized capability, was selected the second-most used at 37% , while HSIN Connect ranked third at 27%.

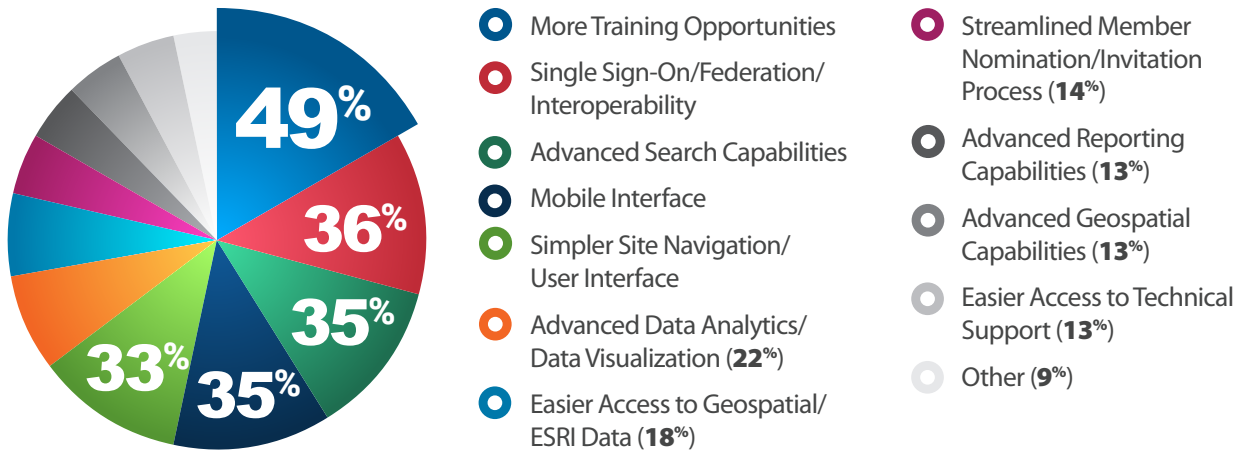
SharePoint Lists and Document Libraries are vital resources for HSIN as they allow users to share, edit and review pertinent information relevant to their specific mission areas of expertise. These lists and libraries help ensure that critical information is readily accessible and quickly shared with partners.



- SharePoint Lists and Document Library
- HSIN Community
- HSIN Connect
- Learning Management System
- Geospatial Services (13%)
- HSIN Exchange (12%)
- Other (12%)
- HSIN Chat (11%)
- HSIN/box (6%)

Features Users Want

In FY20, 49% of users reported they believe the program could improve by providing more training opportunities. Also, 36% indicated that providing better interoperability with other systems through single sign-on or Federation access would prove beneficial in achieving mission success.

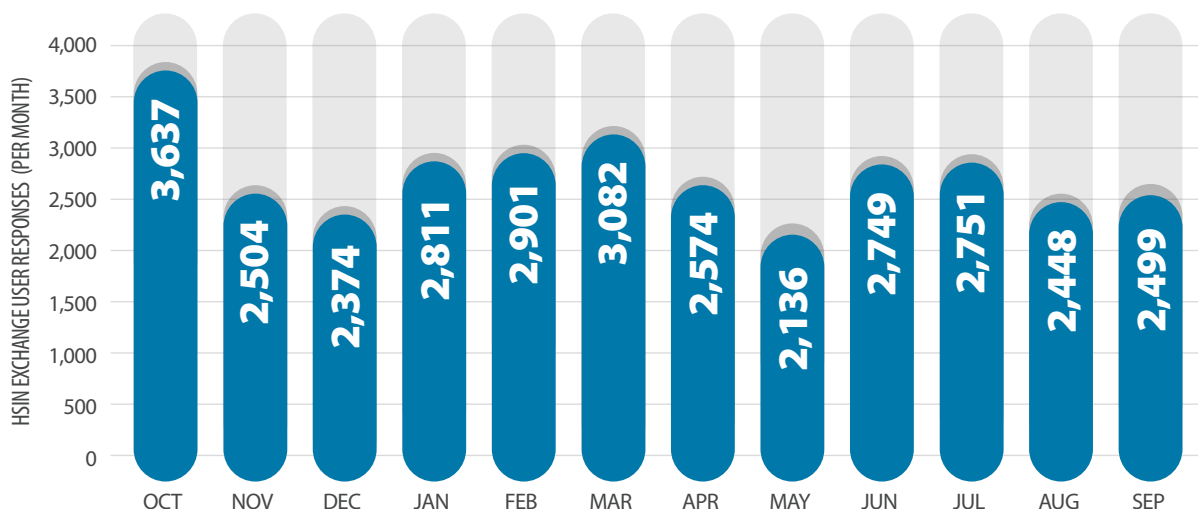


Essential HSIN Tools for the COVID-19 Pandemic Response

HSIN Exchange

HSIN Exchange is a secure request for information (RFI) solution that manages and prioritizes RFIs, centralizes processes and increases efficiency in operations. It also enables seamless interagency and cross-jurisdictional communications, minimizes duplicative responses and provides delivery metrics.

In FY20, HSIN Exchange was used to communicate over 32,000 RFIs with a sizeable % of those RFIs being related to COVID-19 pandemic operations. More than 55 fusion centers utilized HSIN Exchange to respond to COVID-19-related RFIs. Their communications included discussions on locating supplies as well as developing protocols related to COVID-19 response efforts.

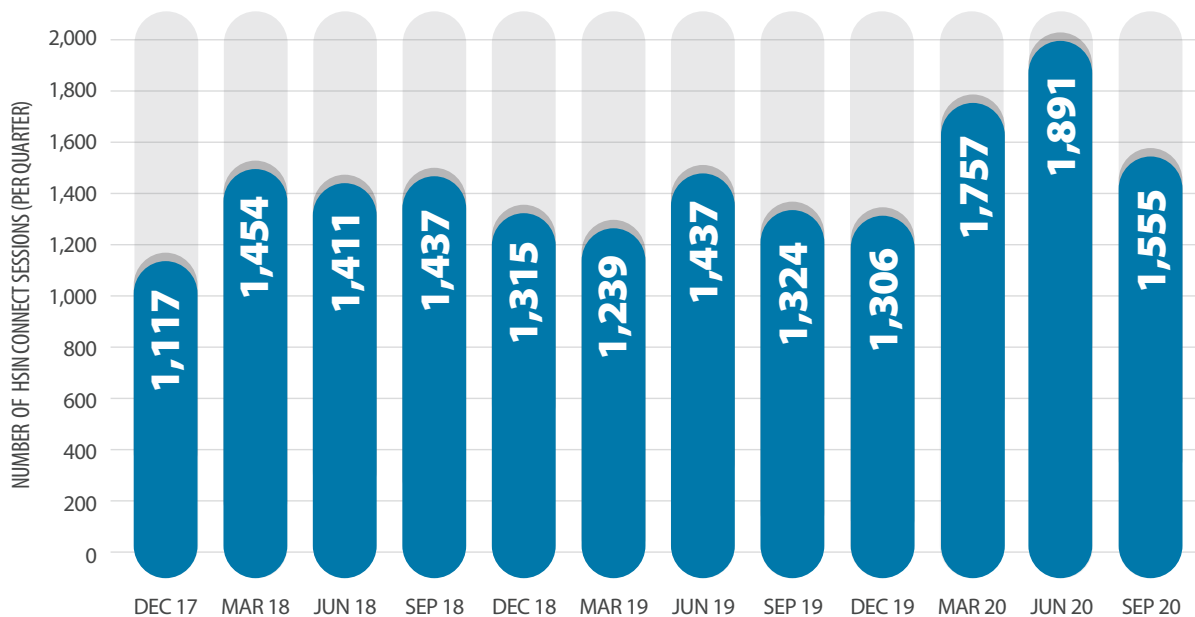
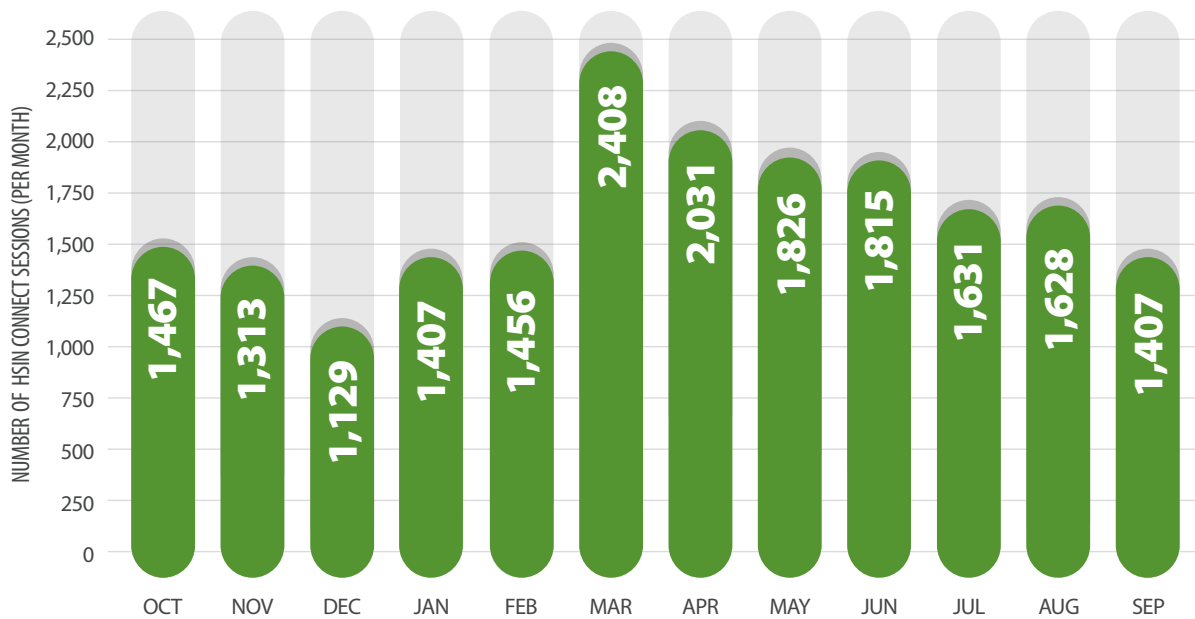


HSIN Connect

HSIN Connect is a robust web conferencing tool that provides a trusted environment for real-time collaboration, instant analysis and response across jurisdictional boundaries. Frontline responders use HSIN Connect to prioritize needs, deconflict multiple reports and reduce duplication of effort. Throughout the past year, analysts, planners and responders used HSIN Connect to share information and coordinate operations related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As HSIN users were required to social distance, several agencies took advantage of HSIN Connect to conduct meetings normally held in person. Fusion centers across the country also used HSIN Connect to operate virtual meeting rooms for law enforcement operations and emergency management, and public information officers used HSIN to follow up on public concerns and possible criminal activities related to COVID-19.

In total, there were 19,527 HSIN Connect sessions conducted in FY20.



HSIN Tools and Other Resources

HSIN's other tools and resources are designed to securely solve a variety of information sharing challenges.

HSIN Communities



HSIN Communities are collaborative spaces that bring together diverse homeland security partners and provide them a secure place to retrieve and share information for incident management, plan security for key events and exercises and conduct daily operations. Members of HSIN communities include law enforcement officers, cybersecurity analysts, counternarcotics agents, critical infrastructure planners, risk analysts, homeland security investigators, emergency management officials and fusion center personnel.

Geospatial Tools



HSIN provides access to geospatial tools and other mapping resources that can be combined with intelligence information and operations from various sources to be viewed on one display. These tools enable geographical data sharing and provide mapping and tracking of incident scenes and planned event sites as well as regular weather updates.

HSIN Chat



HSIN Chat is an instant messaging feature that allows users to share, receive, distribute and update other HSIN users and groups with relevant, time-sensitive and quickly changing information to support mission-critical decision making. The secure environment enables quick answers to questions all while avoiding time-consuming and cluttered email inboxes.

HSINbox



HSINbox provides HSIN users a tool that can disseminate documents, links and notes to other mission partners quickly and securely.

HSIN Learn



HSIN Learn provides users a complete online educational solution designed to help partners learn about the HSIN platform through self-paced, computer-based operational training. HSIN Learn offers customized assistance and instructor-led courses as well as guidance on using each of HSIN's tools and how to build and maintain a HSIN community. Additionally, DHS components can use HSIN Learn as a training repository.

HSIN Training

HSIN provides users a variety of training offerings, including customized in-person sessions as well as a wide range of computer-based courses and other digital education materials. Training courses address the various tools and features HSIN provides in addition to the responsibilities and capabilities for specific user roles such as site owners, content managers and community members. Additionally, Quick Reference Guides allow users to rapidly learn how to access and use key features and tools.

Across all training, key benefits include:

- Offering operational training and hands-on learning experiences.
- Pairing HSIN experts with community representatives to design courses and other training materials.
- Providing users with helpful information about how best to apply HSIN's tools and other resources.

In addition to a comprehensive library of training resources, HSIN Mission Advocates provide users with customized training sessions to meet their specific needs. These sessions include refresher trainings, new capability trainings and planned event, incident and exercise training support.

HSIN Communications

Publications

The HSIN Communications Team develops and distributes the *HSIN Advocate* to all HSIN users on a bimonthly basis. The *HSIN Advocate* includes articles that highlight program accomplishments, resources and activities. The stories and information help HSIN users develop and implement best practices and other strategies to support their operational objectives. The HSIN Communications Team also develops several other articles and messaging for DHS newsletters and online resources.

HSIN Online

The HSIN Communications Team uses online assets such as HSIN Central, DHS Connect and DHS.gov to engage and inform users and stakeholders about HSIN's capabilities and contributions to the homeland security mission. HSIN Central is the primary portal for HSIN users to gain quick access to information about service operations, the HSIN Learn training library, HSIN communities, upcoming events and other announcements pertaining to HSIN.

HSIN Annual Assessment and Report

At the end of each fiscal year, the HSIN Communications Team distributes the HSIN Annual Assessment, an initiative that helps to capture feedback from HSIN's federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, international and private sector partners. The assessment helps HSIN learn how to better meet its approximately 148,000 users' needs.

The HSIN Communications Team also publishes the HSIN Annual Report to inform stakeholders and users about HSIN's strategic goals and accomplishments. The report highlights HSIN's operational support and enhancements, policy and governance and provides users a glance at the year ahead. The annual publication also provides an overview of key HSIN engagements with an emphasis on how partners applied HSIN to their areas of operations.

Technical Support

HSIN's Service Operations team offers 24/7 technical support through its Help Desk to ensure that every user has access to HSIN's capabilities. Throughout the year, the Help Desk provides support to users by quickly diagnosing reported issues and following the appropriate procedures to resolve requests for help. The average speed-to-answer for Help Desk calls during FY20 was 17.5 seconds.

Policy and Governance

As the homeland security enterprise continues to change, HSIN adapts with it. Through unbiased guidance, oversight and user feedback, HSIN's governance structure allows the program to sustainably evolve and mature with each passing year. HSIN also meets policy requirements related to sensitive information sharing and coordinates with users to address any potential risks or emerging issues.

Compliance

HSIN works with the DHS Privacy Office to ensure that the program completes all privacy compliance documentation requirements, such as identifying any potential privacy issues that new updates could create as well as mitigation strategies to reduce potential risks. Proactively complying with policy requirements allows users to remain on the forefront of collaboration while keeping sensitive information secure.

In FY20, HSIN focused on ensuring compliance across the program and updated essential HSIN governance documentation to facilitate more dynamic information exchange. Across these efforts, HSIN had three key priorities:

- Increase collaboration with DHS Components through Mission Outreach collaboration and stakeholder engagement and ensure HSIN communities are in compliance with terms of service as HSIN expands mission usage within DHS Components.
- Augment information sharing possibilities within the system through governance updates based on requested changes from users.
- Continue policy and privacy support for new and current communities.

As HSIN grows with its user base, the program will continue to maintain compliance as new initiatives and tools become necessary to meet the demands of the homeland security enterprise.



Inclusive, Transparent and Accountable Governance

HSIN's governance structure provides oversight and solicits feedback from users to help set the program's strategic direction. The Executive Steering Committee (ESC) oversees the HSIN Program and evaluates new ideas and feedback from stakeholders. Additionally, the HSIN User Group (HUG) allows users to share their recommendations and experiences using HSIN.

HSIN continues to work with executive leadership to ensure involvement in programmatic decisions by engaging all levels of HSIN governance, including the ESC, the Information Sharing Coordination Council (ISCC) and the Information Sharing & Safeguarding Governance Board (ISSGB).

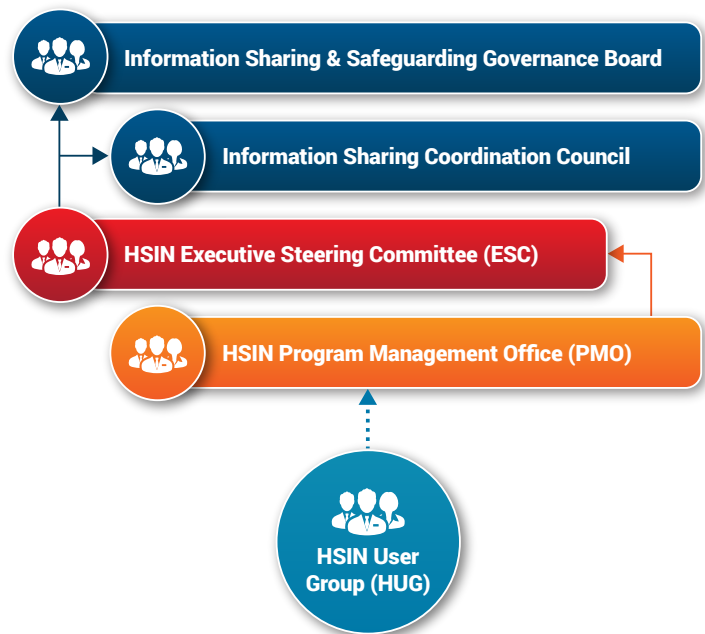
Executive Steering Committee (ESC)

The ESC provides effective governance, oversight and guidance to the HSIN Program to ensure the program meets users' operational needs on time and on budget. The ESC also supports and makes recommendations to the ISSGB, which sets DHS' information sharing and safeguarding priorities as well as direction.

HSIN User Group (HUG)

HSIN evolves based on feedback from the organizations that use it. Users can offer suggestions on how to enhance HSIN through the HSIN User Group (HUG). The HUG also allows HSIN users to share their experiences with the HSIN Program Management Office (PMO) and other users. The HUG is made up of decision-makers, managers, operators, analysts and other HSIN users.

In the second quarter of FY20, HSIN conducted a COVID-19 HSIN User Group (HUG) webinar for all HSIN users to ensure HSIN was providing the best possible service, tools and information. The COVID-19 HUG meeting allowed users to make recommendations and share their experiences with HSIN Program Management and other DHS leaders. This webinar attracted more than 300 users and helped identify areas for growth and best practices that could be applied to COVID-19 support. Leadership ensured that COVID-19 HUG findings were used to enhance HSIN support for COVID-19 response and assist users in leveraging HSIN resources to support their individual mission needs in response to the pandemic.



Goals and Objectives for the Year Ahead

As DHS' trusted platform for sharing Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information, HSIN aligns program goals to meet users' mission requirements. HSIN's achievements in FY20 provide the building blocks for FY21 growth.

Goals and Objectives for FY21

Uphold Security and Trust

- Implement the latest policy and security updates while upholding our current standard of Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) High Confidentiality, High Integrity and High Availability (H-H-H) of systems and data.

Enhance the Core Solution

- Migrate all HSIN applications and users from SharePoint 2010 to SharePoint 2016, while also moving from Oracle to a Microsoft-based Identity, Credential and Access Management (ICAM) solution.
- Demonstrate visual analytics capability.

Sustain the Mission

- Track HSIN costs across approved activity-based costing (ABC) work packages by aligning contracts to cost-effectively support the current HSIN solution and providing data visualization and trend analysis for labor costs.
- Streamline operations through increasing integration with other DHS services.

Plan for the Future

- Refine the core HSIN solution based on lessons learned, best practices, awareness of common requirements and usage and emerging commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) and government off-the-shelf (GOTS) solutions.
- Begin identifying requirements, capabilities and desired themes for the next major version of the HSIN platform.



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